

REMARKS

Claims 5-7 and 11-13 are pending in the present application. Claims 8-10 have been canceled.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 8-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Takada et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,236,725) in view of the Yoshihama et al. reference (JP8-2679777).

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note the Examiner's acknowledgment that claims 5-7 and 11-13 are allowed.

Although Applicants do not necessarily concede that the above noted rejection is proper, claims 8-10 have been canceled merely to advance prosecution of this application. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to acknowledge that the present application is now in condition for allowance as including claims 5-7 and 11-13.

Conclusion

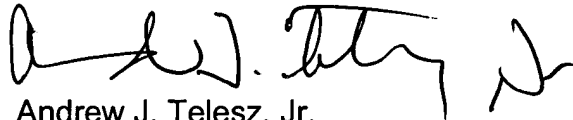
The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the above noted rejection, and to pass the claims of the present application to issue, for at least the above reasons.

In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, please contact Andrew J. Telesz, Jr. (Reg. No. 33,581) at (703) 715-0870 in the Washington, D.C. area, to discuss these matters.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment for any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0238.

Respectfully submitted,

VOLENTINE FRANCOS & WHITT, P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. J. Telesz, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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